

**Carleton University  
Fall 2017  
Department of English**

**ENGL 2108A: Women and Literature:  
What Do Women Want?**

*Prerequisite: second-year standing Precludes additional credit for ENGL 2902 {1.0} (no longer offered).*

**Monday and Wednesday 11:35 – 12:55**

**236 Tory Building  
(Please confirm on Carleton Central)**

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The question “What do women want?” has been variously the basis of the medieval Wife of Bath’s Tale in Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, a major 19<sup>th</sup>-century social movement, and the title and plot of an unfortunate 2000 romantic comedy starring Mel Gibson and Helen Hunt. Not surprisingly, women writers have also addressed this question in their fiction. Aphra Behn, the first English woman to make her living by her pen, incorporated the desires of women into many of her plays and novellas. Both the amatory fiction and the thinly concealed conduct book fiction by female novelists of the 18<sup>th</sup> century continued this trend, as did the writers who followed, regardless of whether or not they identified themselves as feminists.

This course looks at some of the things in fiction that girls and women want, apart from or in addition to love and/or marriage, as conveyed in women’s writing of primarily the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The desire for social status or standing, material wealth, power, and meaningful work have all motivated the female characters of the women writers whose works we’ll be reading, deepening and complicating the stereotypical romance plot. Not all of their female characters are wise or balanced or even likeable, but their fiction gives both realistic and nuanced answers to the central question of the course.

An additional objective of the course is to sharpen students' skills in close reading and critical thinking. A critical journal with frequent feedback will allow students to develop proficiency in their writing.

**Required texts:**

Austen, Jane. *Northanger Abbey* (Broadview)

Bronte, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre* (Broadview)

Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun* (Signet)

Levy, Amy. *The Romance of a Shop* (Broadview)

\*Haywood, Eliza. "Fantomina"

\*Hurston, Zora Neale. "Sweat"

\*Mansfield, Katherine. "Her First Ball" and "Leves Amores"

\*Minot, Susan. "Lust"

\*Gilman, Charlotte. "The Yellow Wallpaper"

\*Glaspell, Susan. "A Jury of Her Peers"

\*Oates, Joyce Carol. "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been"

\*Internet links to the short fiction will be provided.

**These books are available at Octopus Books, 116 Third Avenue.**

**Evaluation:**

Attendance and participation	10%
Journal entries (x5)	25%
Journal introduction	10%
Term test	20%
Final exam	35%

**Please read this carefully:**

1. **Attendance Policy:** Class attendance is mandatory, and attendance will be taken. Excused absences must be medically documented. Absences for work reasons will not be excused. Students who attend only part of a class will be counted as absent from that class. Everyone has two "free" unexcused absences. The third unexcused absence will result in 2 points being deducted from the attendance mark; the fourth unexcused absence will result in 3 additional points being deducted from the attendance mark; the fifth unexcused absence will result in the loss of the whole attendance mark. Participation in class discussions will factor into the overall attendance/participation mark.
2. **Critical Journal:** A course as narrowly focused as this one allows students to follow literary and social trends and to track changes and continuities with some degree of accuracy despite the relatively small number of texts consulted. Students will complete a critical journal comprised of entries on each of the four major texts (*Northanger Abbey*, *Jane Eyre*, *The Romance of a Shop*, and *A Raisin in the Sun*), and on **one** other short text from the syllabus.

Each entry must be double-spaced and 300-400 words in length, and all entries must focus on the **same single topic** taken from the list of topics provided at the end of the course outline. At the end of the term, you will hand in all your marked entries and an Introduction of 300-400 words that summarizes your findings on the topic you've chosen and states or at least suggests a plausible thesis for your journal. Going over or under the word count by more than 15 words will result in a reduction in grade for that entry. Please include the word count at the end of each entry.

The four entries on the long texts and the Introduction are to be submitted *before* the beginning of class on days designated on the syllabus. The short-text entry may be handed in any time before the end of classes. Papers may also be submitted in the Drop Box in the English Secretariat on the 18<sup>th</sup> floor of Dunton Tower. In order to be accepted, papers must be date-stamped with the due date, which means they have to be in the drop box by 8:00 a.m. on the morning after the due date. **IF YOU USE THE DROP BOX, YOU MUST PUT MY NAME ON THE FRONT SHEET. OTHERWISE, THE ESSAY MAY GO ASTRAY. PAPERS THAT GO ASTRAY FOR THIS REASON WILL BE COUNTED AS LATE PAPERS.**

These papers need not be “academic” in terms of a formal essay, but they may **not** refer to the reader....ever!...nor may they be opinion-based. Rather, they should be thoughtful, focused, and well-written, demonstrating substantive knowledge of the text being addressed (in other words, you must demonstrate that you have finished and thought about the text). Each entry is worth 5 points toward the final grade, and the Introduction is worth 10 points. **Students must hand in all five entries and the Introduction to be eligible to write the final exam.**

**NB: No secondary sources are required for the journal.**

3. **Early Feedback Assignment:** The first journal entry on *Northanger Abbey* is due on September 27, and is intended to be used as a guide to your written work in the course.
4. **Late papers** must be accompanied by valid medical documentation in order not to be penalized. Late papers will receive a penalty of 2% per day. Papers more than a week late will receive a grade of 0. Rewrites of papers are not an option. Essays must conform to the stated word count requirement, must answer the essay question, and must discuss only texts read in this course. Papers that are too short or too long by more than 50 words may be penalized.

**Note: If one of your assignments is lost, misplaced, or not received by the instructor, you are responsible for having a backup copy that can be e-mailed immediately upon request.**

5. **Extensions:** Extensions on papers may involve a penalty. All extensions must be arranged by e-mail at least 24 hours in advance of the due date. **No exceptions will be made to this arrangement.**
6. **E-Mail Protocol:** You are encouraged to work with me on your journal entries and to send me the thesis of your finished journal. Please identify the course in the subject line; otherwise, your e-mail may be deleted without being read. Please do not send attachments.

**I DO NOT ACCEPT PAPERS BY E-MAIL. YOU MAY E-MAIL AN ESSAY TO ME ONLY UNDER ALL THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONDITIONS:**

1. If you have printer problems at the last minute
2. If you e-mail me the finished essay by the beginning of the class on the day it is due.
3. If you come to that class and inform me of the problem.
4. If you bring a hard copy of the essay to my office within 24 hours of the due date.

**7. In-class assignments and examinations:** In-class assignments and examinations must be written on the date indicated on the syllabus and may not be made up unless a student has a valid doctor's certificate.

**The Fall term exam period is December 10-22 (including Saturdays and Sundays). The Registrar's Office generally releases the December exam schedule in October. Do not make travel plans until the exam schedule has been released. Exams will not be rescheduled for students who take on other commitments during the exam period.**

**8. Collaboration:** Although you are encouraged to talk with each other about assignments and to review each other's work, all assignments written for evaluation are to be the original work of individual students.

**9. Plagiarism:** See statement on Academic Integrity in the Undergraduate Calendar at

<http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/academicintegrity/>

Plagiarism is a serious matter and can be grounds for expulsion from the University. Plagiarism often occurs because a student is not sure where to draw the line between common knowledge, paraphrase, and direct quotation -- and indeed, the distinctions are sometimes hard to make. The rule of thumb is this: All direct quotations have to be contained by quotation marks and their sources cited in proper MLA documentation style; all paraphrases have to be clearly indicated as such, and their sources also cited. When in doubt about whether a point that you are making is common, shared knowledge in the public domain or the "intellectual property" of another author, either contact me for clarification or err in the direction of documentation.

**Please note that I hand over ALL cases of suspected plagiarism to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences for investigation.**

**10. REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION:**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the Student Guide at

<https://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/academic/students/>.

**Religious obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to

exist. For more details see the Student Guide at <https://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/academic/students/>.

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or <https://carleton.ca/pmc/> for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

### Syllabus

Sept. 6 – Introduction

Sept. 11 – Elements of Fiction and Women Writers

September 13 – “Fantomina”

Sept. 18 – *Northanger Abbey*

Sept. 20 – *Northanger Abbey*

Sept. 25 – *Northanger Abbey*

Sept. 27 – *Northanger Abbey*; ***Northanger Abbey entry due***

Oct. 2 – *Jane Eyre*

Oct. 4 – *Jane Eyre*

**Oct. 9 – THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS**

Oct. 11 – *Jane Eyre*

Oct. 16 – *Jane Eyre*

Oct. 18 – *Jane Eyre*; ***Jane Eyre entry due***

**Oct. 23 – 27 – FALL BREAK**

Oct. 30 – **TERM TEST**

Nov. 1 – *The Romance of a Shop*

Nov. 6 – *The Romance of a Shop*

Nov. 8 – *The Romance of a Shop*

Nov. 13 – *The Romance of a Shop*; ***The Romance of a Shop* entry due**

Nov. 15 – *A Raisin in the Sun*

Nov. 20 – *A Raisin in the Sun*

Nov. 22 – *A Raisin in the Sun*

Nov. 27 - *A Raisin in the Sun*; ***A Raisin in the Sun* entry due**

Nov. 29 – “The Yellow Wallpaper”; “A Jury of her Peers”

Dec. 4 – “Her First Ball”; “Leves Amores”; “Sweat”

Dec. 6 – “Lust”; “Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?”

Dec. 8 – Review; **Introduction and short-text entry due**

### **Journal topics**

Social status or social standing

Material goods

Reputation

Power

Meaningful work

Home (in a spatial sense of a place to live)

Female friendship

Education (in a formal sense)